

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS THE MEASURES ON CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS TAKEN BEFORE CONDUCTING GENERAL ELECTIONS 2015 / 2016 IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

In analyzing the conflict resolutions measures taken before general elections 2015/2016 conducted in Central African Republic, the writer uses democratic peace theory by Michael Doyle which is rooted theoretically in the writings of Immanuel Kant, and in particular his work “Perpetual Peace” (Pugh, 2005).

There are three versions of democratic peace theory that had been argued by democratic peace theorists by examining real conflicts:

1. Monadic version analyzed in 1960’s and 1970’s: democracies in general are more peaceful and are less likely to go to war (Democratic Peace Theory )
2. Dyadic: the most commonly accepted version among democratic peace theorists. Democracies may be even robust in the use of force than non-democracies due partially to the ideological nature of democratic wars and partially to the fact that liberal democratic states are strong with large wealth base. (Williams, 2008)
3. Systemic: as democratic states grow, then the international system as a whole becomes more peaceful (Democratic Peace Theory ).

According to normative arguments of democratic peace theory, democracies believe that other democracies are reasonable, predictable, and trustworthy (The

Democratic Peace Idea). Democratic states are bounded by cultural and social norms that call for non-violent conflict resolution and negotiation. Because democratic leaders are bound by these norms they try to adopt them in international arena which means that a democracy will respect its fellow democracy abiding by these norms and; thus, treat the fellow with great esteem and diplomatic affection.

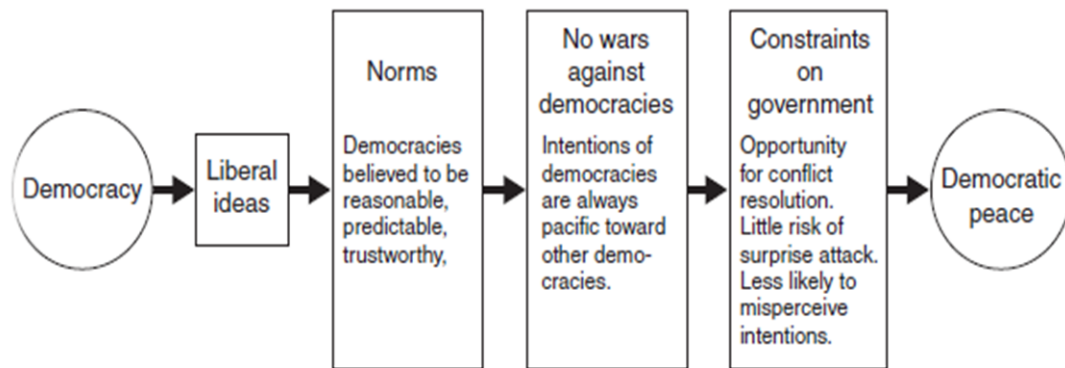


Figure 1 – Norms and Democratic Peace

Source:

[rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR1346/MR1346.apc.pdf](http://rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1346/MR1346.apc.pdf)

This logic argues that autocratic political systems are considered unjust and immoral. From the perspective of democracy, war may be necessary to free people from dictatorship. Democracies may also want to introduce the idea of human right (Democratic Peace Theory ).

Based on the explanation about democratic peace theory above, in explaining the measures on conflict resolutions taken before conducting general elections 2016 in Central African Republic as liberal democracy idea, the writer analyzes that there are several conflict resolutions taken by both internal and external actors to support the success of the elections.

## **A. Recreation of Cultural and Social norms between Muslims and Christians**

### **1. Faith-Based Actors Role**

In dealing with the problem, not only state that has its role, some faith-based actors (priests, imams, missionaries), either as religious leaders or as directors of schools and health center could be influential in dealing with the problem. Based on the figure 1 about normative argument of democratic peace theory, democracy is bounded by norms. Since Muslim and Christian communities in the Central African Republic (C.A.R) are separated by mutual fear and suspicion, and the chances of restoring social cohesion in the country are dwindling rapidly, one of the conflict resolutions taken before conducting general elections as the part of democracy idea is the recreation of cultural and social norms between Muslims and Christians.

Creating cultural and social norms in Central African Republic aimed to create cohesiveness between Muslim and Christians since the conflict in the

country somehow was influenced by political interests that used religious matter as the mean to achieve their interest. In this process, the actor who plays a role is faith-based actors.

In December 2012, religious leaders from different communities came together to form the Inter-Religious Platform (IRP) and to discuss about plan actions and messages aimed to reduce the tension of the conflict, also to mediate the conflicting parties. It was supported by international faith-based NGOs, including Catholic International Development Charity (CAFOD), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Muslim Charities Forum. In this platform, religious leaders were influential in advocating for peace. Also, the advocacy done by those faith-based actors had called international action and the deployment of a peacekeeping mission like robust response from UN Member States, the Security Council. International NGOs such as *Médecins Sans Frontières*, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International (Barbelet, 2015).

Advocacy done by faith-based actors had triggered diplomatic action by the United States toward the government of Central African Republic to deal with the conflict. Furthermore, it also had put pressure on France to take stronger action, including the deployment of the French military. This advocacy also helped to start discussions within the Security Council about the possibility of UN peacekeeping operation in the country. Through social

cohesion workshops the IRP has also created spaces for dialogue within and between communities, reaching more than 200 religious and community leaders (Neal, 2014). However, the given protection and assistance in humanitarian field were limited.

## **2. Regional Organization Role**

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government (Central African Republic | NDI). NDI had already helped the society to conduct discussion aimed to share democratic values and maintain the peace relation among citizens in Central African Republic who got the impact of the conflict.

NDI had established more than 45 local peace and reconciliation committees as the representative of cross-section of citizens in communities as the way to share the idea of conflict prevention (Central African Republic | NDI).

NDI had also cooperated with its partners and the peace committees to organize awareness-raising and reconciliation events. Some events that had already been conducted by NDI were soccer matches, dance competitions, cultural exchanges, skits, debates, discussions, and other fun community

events that could increase a sense of shared community and appreciation for each others' cultures, efforts, and points of view (Central African Republic | NDI).

Actions taken by NDI were also influential in recreating cultural and social norms between Muslims and Christians that were influenced by political interests of conflicting parties. Beside that, actions taken by NDI also aimed to “re-unite” Muslims and Christians that was also somehow pitted against each other and seen as conflicting parties due to the image made by certain parties that had interests in gaining power. This process was analyzed as one of the conflict resolution taken before conducting general elections in Central African Republic. Based on the democratic peace theory, norms were created before the achievement of peace.

## **B. Humanitarian Aid and Diplomatic Assistance**

As a democratic peace theory explained above, fellow democracy will treat the fellow with great esteem and diplomatic affection, managing humanitarian problems in Central African Republic was one of the processes taken before conducting general elections.

Harbottle in his paper insisted that “conflict resolution should not be understood as a successful defeat of the enemy and an end to the fighting...but the restoration of law and order, social and economic stability,

the guarantee of people's human rights, rehabilitation of the structures... structural violence that prefaced the manifest of violence" (Harbottle, 1994).

Based on the democratic peace theory also, democracy will face constraint on government by using opportunity for conflict resolution. As one of the effort to restoration of Central African Republic government and public condition, there were humanitarian aids and diplomatic supports given by international actors. It also aimed to create conducive situation before conducting general elections.

## **1. Humanitarian Aid and Diplomatic Support to the Transitional**

### **Government by U.S.**

Under Obama's administration, United States of America put a high concern toward the crisis happened in Central African Republic. By giving humanitarian aid, U.S. wanted to show its effort to elevate the prevention of "mass atrocities" as the concern of its' foreign policy. Despite of humanitarian aid given, U.S. also scaled up the diplomatic efforts to C.A.R by resuming diplomatic operations in Bangui on September 2014 (Arieff & Husted, Crisis in the Central African Republic, 2015).

The United States was considered as the leading bilateral humanitarian donor to Central African Republic (USAID, Central African Republic—Humanitarian Update #74, October 15, 2014 [on FY2014], and Central African Republic—Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #16, FY2015, 2015).

Not only in term of security, United States also provided financial support to the U.N. peacekeeping operation, MINUSCA, through assessed contributions, additional voluntary assistance to African peacekeeping troop contributors and logistical support to French forces, and funding for aid programs to promote peace and stability, justice sector capacity, and the electoral process (Arieff & Husted, Crisis in the Central African Republic, 2015).

The United States also had provided diplomatic support to the transitional government and to the Bangui Forum (national consultations) in May 2015. The Administration has also engaged in public diplomacy initiatives to halt the violence, including a recorded message from President Obama to the people of C.A.R in December 2013 and a visit to C.A.R by an interfaith delegation of U.S. religious leaders.

When the country had already gained diplomatic support, the country would gain the stability in international position and regained its sovereignty. Since the conflict occurred, the country somehow seem like could not play its role to protect its citizen but with the diplomatic support from other country, the government of C.A.R could gradually play its role and be capable to conduct general elections as the conflict resolution in the country.



## **2. Humanitarian Aid by International Organizations**

Beside United States of America, several international organizations such as International Rescue Committee (IRC) and European Union (EU) put high concern toward humanitarian crisis. As the impact of the conflict, many public infrastructures of the country were dismissed. It made the people of Central African Republic faced difficulties in accessing basic needs like health and education service. In dealing with the crisis, IRC took the actions by providing health care, restoring water sources and also building school for the survivors of the conflict. Not only that, IRC also tried to create economic opportunity for the victims of the conflict. In increasing the safety, IRC tried to conduct dialogues and workshops on gender-based violence (Central African Republic | International Rescue Committee ).

While IRC focused on its programs, European Union also took a good contribution in dealing with humanitarian crisis in Central African Republic. The European Commission was funding the humanitarian projects to enable the access of food assistance, water, sanitation, health service, and also shelter (European Commission Central African Republic , 2016).

When humanitarian aid had already been provided in the country, the stability of the country would be return gradually and create a stable condition to participate and support the process in conducting general elections.

## **C. International Assistance**

As explained in the normative figure of democratic peace theory, democratic states are bounded by cultural and social norms that call for non-violent conflict resolution and negotiation. Because democratic leaders are bound by these norms they try to adopt them in international arena which means that a democracy will respect its fellow democracy abiding by these norms and; thus, treat the fellow with great esteem and diplomatic affection. International assistance is showing diplomatic affection regarding non-violent resolution and negotiation done by other international actors to Central African Republic as the conflict resolutions taken before conducting general elections.

### **1. Security Assistance**

#### **1.1.Sangaris Troops and MISCA role**

Since general elections in C.A.R had already suffered from irregularities and security threats from the conflicting parties, international assistance that was firstly needed was security assistance to create conducive situation in the country before conducting general elections.

As the response of conflict escalation between Anti-Balaka and Séléka which was emerged after the coup of Francoiz Bozize in the March 2013, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) deployed the African-led

International Support Mission in Central Africa (MISCA) in December 2013 (UNSC, Monthly Forecast : Central African Republic, 2013). MISCA was tasked to protect the civilians and establish the conducive environment. There are ten African countries that contributed in the forming of MISCA including comprises soldiers from Gabon, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville and Cameroon. However, Chad troops were withdrawn since Chad supported one side of the conflicting parties (ACLED, COUNTRY REPORT: CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 2015).

At the same time, France also contributed in security assistance to help MISCA by establishing Operation Sangaris, which was began on December 2013 by sending French troops country. The Sangaris operation aimed to disarm the militias and also secure the capital city of the country, Bangui (Arieff & Husted, Crisis in the Central African Republic, 2015).

In doing its mission, MISCA was placed in 12 locations in the north-west of the country. The force focused on a disarmament campaign and also supported the delivery of humanitarian assistance through its presence in and around locations where aid was being delivered and by securing transport routes.

## **1.2.MINUSCA Role**

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was established on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2014

under Security Council Resolution as the transition mission after MISCA. In the period preceding the transfer of authority between both missions, MINUSCA implemented the mandated tasks through its civilian component, while MISCA continued to implement its tasks as mandated by Security Council (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic ).

The mandates brought by MINUSCA focused on the protection of civilians, support for the implementation of the transition process, including efforts in favor of the extension of State authority and preservation of territorial integrity, facilitate the immediate, full, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance, protection of the United Nations, promotion and protection of human rights, support for national and international justice and the rule of law, Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Repatriation (DDRR) (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central African Republic ).

### **1.3.Bangui National Forum**

As one of the efforts taken before conducting general elections, Bangui National Forum was influential in creating conducive situation in the country. It was conducted on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 as one of the way to foster national cohesion. The forum was attended by approximately 700 leaders

from different groups including Séléka and Anti-Balaka as the conflicting armed parties (Mission Report and Post Bangui Forum Action, 2015). The forum talked about the agreements on disarmament, governance reforms, and reconciliation that could, if implemented, provide a way forward to greater peace (Arieff & Husted, Crisis in the Central African Republic, 2015).

In *Mission Report and Post Bangui Forum Action* (2015), Bangui national forum that was also attended by religious and political groups of the country resulted several important points as follows:

a. New disarmament agreement between Séléka and Anti-Balaka

After the debate between the participants of national Bangui Forum, Séléka and Anti-Balaka agreed to give up their weapons by the time of national elections. The former combatants of both parties would be the state security institutions as long as they did not commit war crimes while the armed actors from other countries would be sent back to the origin countries.

b. The release of child soldiers

During the attack between Séléka and Anti-Balaka in Central African Republic, both of them had already arrested the children to be employed as the soldiers. As one of the agreement in national Bangui Forum, both conflicting parties agreed to release all of the children to

receive medical treatment, psychosocial support, and then would be returned to their families and communities.

c. A Timeline For Elections

Since disarmament between conflicting parties had already been agreed, the forum also talked about the timeline to conduct the elections. As the transition of the government, the forum chose Conference of Heads of State of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to remain in office until the elections take place.

d. National and Local Mechanism for Justice and Reconciliation

As the conflict resolution taken before conduction general elections also, the participants of Bangui Forum recommended to re-structure the justice and reconciliation in the country, including a national truth and reconciliation commission, as well as broad-based, local peace and reconciliation committees. To avoid the conflict happen again, the participants suggest to build trust between stakeholders and put the role of religious leaders in building peace.

e. Social and Economic development priorities

Seeing the impact made by the conflict between Anti-Balaka and Séléka, the participants of Bangui Forum suggested to focus on the development of social and economic field of the country since poverty and inequalities were the structural causes of the conflict.

## **2. Political and Electoral Assistance**

According to democratic peace theory, autocratic political systems are considered unjust and immoral. From the perspective of democracy, war may be necessary to free people from dictatorship. Democracies may also want to introduce the idea of human right (Democratic Peace Theory ).

In applying the theory to analyze the measure on conflict resolutions taken before conducting general elections in Central African Republic, the writer analyzed that there were political and electoral assistance from other actors since the structural position in the government or even public services of C.A.R could not conduct its maximal functions. They were only positioned by transitional government and some of the actors who were positioned in public services were involving in the conflict. That is why the role of other regional and international actors like Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) and United Nations were needed.

### **2.1.EISA Role**

Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) is a non-profit organization established in 1996 based in Johannesburg (South Africa). The vision of EISA is to establish democratic governance, human rights and citizen participation are upheld in a peaceful environment in the African continent (About EISA ). EISA has opened an office in Bangui since October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.

EISA was deployed as the needs assessment mission to Bangui, Central African Republic (C.A.R) from August, 26<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> 2014. The objective of the mission was to understand the general environment regarding political transition, preparation of elections. EISA also aimed to analyze the needs and opportunities to support the process of transition and exit from the crisis in the country (About EISA ).

In general, the needs assessment mission of the EISA in the C.A.R concluded that the electoral process in the Central African Republic was very startling and delays in the operationalization of the electoral administration, the lack of progress in the implementation of the first pre-elections operations (About EISA ).The peaceful preparation of elections depended on the existence of an appropriate legal and institutional mechanism as on the availability of adequate technical, financial and material resources.

One of the programs conducted by EISA in C.A.R was workshop about civic and voter education capacity building (About EISA ). The main objective of this program was to strengthen the capacity of some organizations of the civil society and voter education in order to promote full and effective participation in various phases of the electoral process, specifically by developing synergies to share available resources and thus to be more effective, actively raising awareness of citizens and their values education for peace and social cohesion, getting involved in raising



awareness of the registration of voters, promoting participation of citizens in electoral process and even undertaking elections observation over the long term by following all the electoral cycle activities.

## **2.2. United Nations Role**

In preparing for the elections in Central African Republic, United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) and MINUSCA were the international actors who played a big role. By coordinating with national transitional government of C.A.R, and also were supported by Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, MINUSCA and UNDP developed a multi-disciplinary operational plan and concept of operations to support the Transitional Authorities on the electoral process (UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic, 2015).

A plan consisted of efforts was needed to be taken in accordance to create the conducive environment for the elections, public awareness and sensitization, technical assistance, monitoring, and capacity-building. It also outlined the detail of logistics planning for the voter registration process, voting, and post-electoral support to the National Electoral Authority and the national internal security forces. In accordance to objectify the plans, MINUSCA established an ad hoc committee to increase awareness among

national actors on women's candidacies and effective participation in the elections.

By being chaired by MINUSCA, United Nations country team continued to meet regularly to coordinate the provision of integrated electoral support to the Transitional Authorities. UNDP approved an electoral support project and established a basket fund for international partners' contributions. The Fund Steering Committee held its first meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss funding for the electoral process. As at February, 2015, the funding gap of the UNDP project amounted to approximately 38 percent or \$16,608,745.

The National Electoral Authority established 88 out of 142 local branch offices and completed the assessment of 70 out of an estimated 3,300 polling sites. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, agreements were signed with the European Union on the disbursement of an initial installment of \$8 million in support of the elections. The contribution, combined with those from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and France, as well as the pledge of \$500,000 from the African Union, will facilitate the launch of the voter registration process.

On December 27<sup>th</sup> 2014, an amended electoral law was adopted combining the presidential and legislative elections and promoting non-biometric voter registration. The law has yet to be promulgated, owing to a decision on January 16<sup>th</sup> by the Constitutional Court regarding the

harmonization of the provisions of the electoral code and the participation of internally displaced population and refugees in the process.

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, during a meeting involving the National Electoral Authority, other national electoral stakeholders and international partners, the Authority briefed participants on the constraints and challenges in the electoral process and called for the disbursement of pledges by partners and greater national ownership. Representatives of some political parties raised concerns about the security situation, the eligibility criteria and the high number of potential candidates.

After getting the political and electoral assistance from other national and international actors, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reported that Central African Republic achieved significant betterment in its political transition, most notably the peaceful and successful holding of a constitutional referendum on December 13<sup>th</sup> and legislative and presidential elections in December, February and March (UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic S/2016/305, 2016).

United Nations country team, MINUSCA and helped by national and international partners conducted a series of activities to achieve a conducive political and security environment in the elections process. The activities conducted including the information about code of good conduct, training for political party elections monitors and information sessions for

presidential candidates with the National Electoral Authority. MINUSCA also conducted informal meetings with presidential and legislative candidates throughout the country and facilitated meetings between the Coordination Group for the Preparation of and Follow-up to the Meetings of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic and candidates to impress on them the importance of issue-based campaigns responding to the aspirations of Central Africans, including with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation.

The National Electoral Authority reported that the elections would be participated by 30 presidential candidates (including one woman) and 1,643 legislative candidates (including 175 women). Not only the people in C.A.R who participated in the elections, but United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also helped to enable refugees in neighboring states to participate in the electoral process.

After being postponed, the first round of presidential and legislative elections was held on December 30<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, there were 415 appeals reported during the first round of elections which made the Court annulled the results and announced that a new first round would need to be held. Despite on the appeals reported, there were also complaints regarding the technical errors.

The second round of presidential elections was held on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. In this round, there was improvement in the overall organization. Although there were 3 appeals reported in this round, The Transitional Constitutional Court rejected them and proclaimed the final results of the presidential elections on March 1<sup>st</sup>, resulting candidate Faustin Archange Touadera as President with 62.69 percent of the vote, and with Anicet George Dologuélé garnering 37.31 percent (UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic S/2016/305, 2016). While the second-place presidential candidate positioned by Mr. Dologuele. Fortunately, he conceded victory following the announcement of the provisional results had a generally positive effect on the post-electoral environment, including among his supporters.